

NAMI NJ ONLINE SUPPORT GROUPS

In these unusual times we are aware that some NAMI affiliates are suspending support groups or limiting attendance, and we have closed the NAMI NJ office through March 29. In order to close the gap, we are planning on offering online NAMI support groups via Zoom meeting, beginning March 25, and running at least through April 8. You will be able to access these meetings from any computer, mobile device, or telephone (we do not recommend plain phone use).

These will be high fidelity NAMI support groups, each led by two certified facilitators, using the agenda, group guidelines, principles of support, and stages of emotional response presented below (attendees may want to have their copy handy, especially if they will be calling in from a phone).

We will need to take some specific steps to make online support groups work, outlined in the chart below.

	NAMI Connection	NAMI Family Support
Who	People over the age of 18, dealing with a mental/emotional issue	People over the age of 18 who consider themselves a loved one and/or caregiver of someone with a mental health condition
When	Wednesdays, 12pm-1pm and 7-8pm	Tuesdays, 12-1pm and Wednesdays, 7-8pm
Call Quality	<p>Anyone who is used to being on conference calls know that communications can get a bit confusing (see, for instance, this video). Please note:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The facilitators will pay close attention to the flow of conversation. 2. The facilitators will demonstrate aspects of the call, including sidebar chat and “raise hand.” 3. We will limit attendance to 12 people: Please register for a support group at: https://forms.gle/jBcL2z1UFog71uF88 (If demand is high, we will add more sessions; let us know if you are a certified facilitator, comfortable with online meetings, and willing to facilitate.) 4. Please do not call in if you cannot do so with a clear connection in a stationary location. 5. Please make sure you know how to mute and unmute yourself. 6. If needed, facilitators may be forced to mute or disconnect attendees. 	
Confidentiality	<p>The facilitators will take a few minutes to share an enhanced confidentiality reminder, emphasizing that we rely on callers to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Ensure that you and anyone else who can see or hear the call are members of the appropriate group. 8. Note that Zoom and NAMI NJ collect basic information such as IP address, zip code, etc. 9. Calls will not be recorded. Please do not take screenshots or any recordings, or take notes with personal information. 10. Please close your door, close your computer when you step away, use a headset, etc. as needed to preserve group privacy if you are not alone. 	
Safety	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Individuals on the call who are “mandated reporters” will announce themselves. Please note, that all residents of NJ are mandated reporters of known or potential harm to a child. 12. Even with pre-registration, we have no way of knowing who is listening to our meetings. Therefore, we urge attendees to <u>be cautious when sharing personal information or anything others might perceive of as dangerous or threatening</u>. 13. If you have something critical to communicate with the facilitator which is private, you can use the CHAT feature, addressing him/her only. 14. Remember that as a team of statewide facilitators, we are less likely to have local crisis diversion resources and background than those in your local affiliate or multicultural group. 	

AGENDA

1. Welcome
2. Read Principles of Support & Guidelines
3. Opening Stories (2-minute limit)
4. Group Discussion
5. Closing

GROUP GUIDELINES

1. Start and stop on time
2. Time limit for opening stories
3. Absolute confidentiality
4. Be respectful
5. Be mindful of others; no monopolizing or cross talk
6. Keep it in the present
7. Empathize with each other's situation

PRINCIPLES OF SUPPORT

1. We will see the individual first, not the illness.
2. We recognize that mental illnesses are medical illnesses that may have environmental triggers.
3. We understand that mental illnesses are traumatic events.
4. We aim for better coping skills.
5. We find strength in sharing experiences.
6. We reject stigma and do not tolerate discrimination.
7. We won't judge anyone's pain as less than our own.
8. We forgive ourselves and reject guilt.
9. We embrace humor as healthy.
10. We accept we cannot solve all problems.
11. We expect a better future in a realistic way.
12. We will never give up hope.

STAGES OF EMOTIONAL RESPONSE

	<i>DEALING WITH CATASTROPHIC EVENTS</i>	<i>LEARNING TO COPE</i>	<i>MOVING INTO ADVOCACY</i>
CHARAC- TERISTICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crisis/Chaos/ Shock • Denial; "normalizing" • Hoping Against Hope 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anger/Guilt/ • Resentment • Recognition • Grief 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding • Acceptance • Advocacy/Action
NEEDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support • Comfort • Empathy for confusion • Help finding resources • Crisis intervention • Prognosis • Empathy for pain • NAMI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vent feelings • Keep hope • Education • Self-care • Networking • Skill training • Letting go • Co-op from System • NAMI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activism • Restoring balance in life • Responsiveness from System • NAMI